

Federal Reserve System

§ 202.4

(ii) Section 202.5(c) concerning information about a spouse or former spouse;

(iii) Section 202.5(d)(1) concerning information about marital status;

(iv) Section 202.7(b) relating to designation of name to the extent necessary to comply with rules regarding an account in which a broker or dealer has an interest, or rules regarding the aggregation of accounts of spouses to determine controlling interests, beneficial interests, beneficial ownership, or purchase limitations and restrictions;

(v) Section 202.7(c) relating to action concerning open-end accounts, to the extent the action taken is on the basis of a change of name or marital status;

(vi) Section 202.7(d) relating to the signature of a spouse or other person;

(vii) Section 202.10 relating to furnishing of credit information; and

(viii) Section 202.12(b) relating to record retention.

(c) *Incidental credit*—(1) *Definition*. Incidental credit refers to extensions of consumer credit other than the types described in paragraphs (a) and (b) of this section:

(i) That are not made pursuant to the terms of a credit card account;

(ii) That are not subject to a finance charge (as defined in Regulation Z, 12 CFR 226.4); and

(iii) That are not payable by agreement in more than four installments.

(2) *Exceptions*. The following provisions of this regulation do not apply to incidental credit:

(i) Section 202.5(b) concerning information about the sex of an applicant, but only to the extent necessary for medical records or similar purposes;

(ii) Section 202.5(c) concerning information about a spouse or former spouse;

(iii) Section 202.5(d)(1) concerning information about marital status;

(iv) Section 202.5(d)(2) concerning information about income derived from alimony, child support, or separate maintenance payments;

(v) Section 202.7(d) relating to the signature of a spouse or other person;

(vi) Section 202.9 relating to notifications;

(vii) Section 202.10 relating to furnishing of credit information; and

(viii) Section 202.12(b) relating to record retention.

(d) *Government credit*—(1) *Definition*. Government credit refers to extensions of credit made to governments or governmental subdivisions, agencies, or instrumentalities.

(2) *Applicability of regulation*. Except for § 202.4(a), the general rule against discrimination on a prohibited basis, the requirements of this regulation do not apply to government credit.

§ 202.4 General rules.

(a) *Discrimination*. A creditor shall not discriminate against an applicant on a prohibited basis regarding any aspect of a credit transaction.

(b) *Discouragement*. A creditor shall not make any oral or written statement, in advertising or otherwise, to applicants or prospective applicants that would discourage on a prohibited basis a reasonable person from making or pursuing an application.

(c) *Written applications*. A creditor shall take written applications for the dwelling-related types of credit covered by § 202.13(a).

(d) *Form of disclosures*—(1) *General rule*. A creditor that provides in writing any disclosures or information required by this regulation must provide the disclosures in a clear and conspicuous manner and, except for the disclosures required by §§ 202.5 and 202.13, in a form the applicant may retain.

(2) *Disclosures in electronic form*. The disclosures required by this part that are required to be given in writing may be provided to the applicant in electronic form, subject to compliance with the consumer consent and other applicable provisions of the Electronic Signatures in Global and National Commerce Act (E-Sign Act) (15 U.S.C. 7001 *et seq.*). Where the disclosures under §§ 202.5(b)(1), 202.5(b)(2), 202.5(d)(1), 202.5(d)(2), 202.13, and 202.14(a)(2)(i) accompany an application accessed by the applicant in electronic form, these disclosures may be provided to the applicant in electronic form on or with the application form, without regard to the consumer consent or other provisions of the E-Sign Act.

§ 202.5

12 CFR Ch. II (1–14 Edition)

(e) *Foreign-language disclosures.* Disclosures may be made in languages other than English, provided they are available in English upon request.

[Reg. B, 68 FR 13161, Mar. 18, 2003, as amended at 72 FR 63451, Nov. 9, 2007]

§ 202.5 Rules concerning requests for information.

(a) *General rules*—(1) *Requests for information.* Except as provided in paragraphs (b) through (d) of this section, a creditor may request any information in connection with a credit transaction.¹

(2) *Required collection of information.* Notwithstanding paragraphs (b) through (d) of this section, a creditor shall request information for monitoring purposes as required by § 202.13 for credit secured by the applicant's dwelling. In addition, a creditor may obtain information required by a regulation, order, or agreement issued by, or entered into with, a court or an enforcement agency (including the Attorney General of the United States or a similar state official) to monitor or enforce compliance with the Act, this regulation, or other federal or state statutes or regulations.

(3) *Special-purpose credit.* A creditor may obtain information that is otherwise restricted to determine eligibility for a special purpose credit program, as provided in § 202.8(b), (c), and (d).

(b) *Limitation on information about race, color, religion, national origin, or sex.* A creditor shall not inquire about the race, color, religion, national origin, or sex of an applicant or any other person in connection with a credit transaction, except as provided in paragraphs (b)(1) and (b)(2) of this section.

(1) *Self-test.* A creditor may inquire about the race, color, religion, national origin, or sex of an applicant or any other person in connection with a credit transaction for the purpose of conducting a self-test that meets the requirements of § 202.15. A creditor that makes such an inquiry shall disclose

orally or in writing, at the time the information is requested, that:

(i) The applicant will not be required to provide the information;

(ii) The creditor is requesting the information to monitor its compliance with the federal Equal Credit Opportunity Act;

(iii) Federal law prohibits the creditor from discriminating on the basis of this information, or on the basis of an applicant's decision not to furnish the information; and

(iv) If applicable, certain information will be collected based on visual observation or surname if not provided by the applicant or other person.

(2) *Sex.* An applicant may be requested to designate a title on an application form (such as Ms., Miss, Mr., or Mrs.) if the form discloses that the designation of a title is optional. An application form shall otherwise use only terms that are neutral as to sex.

(c) *Information about a spouse or former spouse*—(1) *General rule.* Except as permitted in this paragraph, a creditor may not request any information concerning the spouse or former spouse of an applicant.

(2) *Permissible inquiries.* A creditor may request any information concerning an applicant's spouse (or former spouse under paragraph (c)(2)(v) of this section) that may be requested about the applicant if:

(i) The spouse will be permitted to use the account;

(ii) The spouse will be contractually liable on the account;

(iii) The applicant is relying on the spouse's income as a basis for repayment of the credit requested;

(iv) The applicant resides in a community property state or is relying on property located in such a state as a basis for repayment of the credit requested; or

(v) The applicant is relying on alimony, child support, or separate maintenance payments from a spouse or former spouse as a basis for repayment of the credit requested.

(3) *Other accounts of the applicant.* A creditor may request that an applicant list any account on which the applicant is contractually liable and to provide the name and address of the person in whose name the account is held.

¹This paragraph does not limit or abrogate any Federal or State law regarding privacy, privileged information, credit reporting limitations, or similar restrictions on obtainable information.